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EDUCATOR

Student Success
is Everyone's Responsibility



 **Temple
University**
College of Education
and Human Development

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A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN



Grounded in our new vision, mission and values, the College of Education and Human Development remains steadfast in advancing five strategic priorities: Culture and Operations, Curriculum, Teaching and Research, Centers and Institutes, Community Partnerships, and Student Success.

In this edition of the *Educator*, we amplify our commitment to student success—which represents our “why.” We are dedicated to ensuring that all students have access to educational opportunities. Through high-quality programs, innovative teaching and a supportive community, we are shaping leaders, driving change and expanding impact.

We invite you to learn more about Jennifer Johnson, our associate dean of student success, and to explore the pathways programs led by Juliet Curci, our assistant dean of college access and persistence. Lastly, we are incredibly grateful to those of you who donated to our general scholarship fund.

You'll meet one of the scholarship recipients, Dereck Darden, a master's student in the counseling psychology program, whose journey exemplifies the power of education to change lives. We are living out our founder's vision by cultivating and nurturing the “acres of diamonds” in our backyard. Together, we continue to build a brighter future for education and beyond.



Monika Williams Shealey, PhD, Dean and Professor
College of Education and Human Development

A MESSAGE FROM THE ASSISTANT DEAN



Just a year ago, the College of Education and Human Development embarked on strategic action planning to guide its future success. Starting with this issue, we invite you to learn more about the plan's implementation in each of our strategic priority areas: Culture and Operations, Curriculum, Teaching and Research, Centers and

Institutes, Community Partnerships, and, for this edition, Student Success. We are excited about all the possibilities that await. After reading, we hope you are, too.

As always, we welcome your thoughts and updates. Temple Owls are everywhere and doing incredible things.

Kirsten Halck-Kratz, Assistant Dean
Development and Alumni Relations

A MESSAGE FROM THE ALUMNI BOARD

Hello CEHD Community,

We are thankful for the continuing fellowship of Temple alumni, especially the College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) alumni family. Congratulations to all the students that graduated this winter, and best of luck to you as you begin your career journeys serving the public. No matter where you go or what you do, it is not just our shared sense of place that joins us but also the shared values of investing in people for the betterment of our communities and society at large.

As the newly appointed co-chairs of the CEHD Alumni Association, we seek to bring this organization to the forefront of what it means to attend, and have attended, our college. We aim to build a culture of alumni involvement at the CEHD, a process that starts with engaging with current students. Opportunities to provide mentorship and connections that will enhance the studies and collegiate experience of current Owls are also opportunities for alumni to connect with each other, building bridges across the region and beyond. After all, Temple Owls are everywhere!

Right now, we are working with Dean Shealey and her new administration, along with alumni relations and student leaders, to ask the right questions and foster the right conversations that will bring us closer to our goal of activating a passionate alumni base engaging CEHD Owls past and present for the betterment of the whole. If this sounds like something you want to be a part of, get involved! This year, 2025, is going to be a great year to be a Temple Owl, and we hope you will join us in making it so.

– Sam Forman, EDU '16 and Tory Hagains, EDU '97
Co-chairs



ALUMNI NOTES



Taneisha Spall

Taneisha Spall, *EDU '02* always wanted to be a teacher. She held positions teaching secondary English and administration in public and charter schools across the region. However, 18 years into her career, she started to become disheartened. “There were a lot of barriers to making a difference.”

Spall was looking at positions on the Commonwealth website when she came across a role for the Department of Corrections looking for a school principal and applied. Now, six years later, Spall oversees the educational departments of eight prisons and all statewide post-secondary instruction.

The role reignited her passion for teaching and the well-being of students themselves. Spall remarked that several students are minors working on their GEDs. The education programs allow for various skill levels and program autonomy.

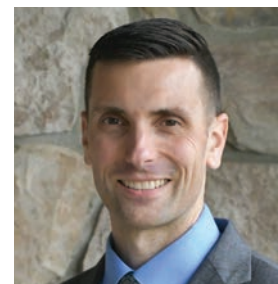
She acknowledges that many people do not think prisoners should be educated, but 92% of the current inmate population will be returning home. The programs ensure a better re-entry once they have served their sentences.

Michelle DeLucia

Michelle DeLucia, *KLN '06, EDU '18* grew up in the Philadelphia suburbs and was attracted to the busy, eclectic urban Temple campus. DeLucia finished her undergraduate degree at Klein College of Media and Communication and took her first job in sales with Verizon. Later, she worked in recruiting for a small healthcare system. These positions ultimately led to her putting down roots at the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP).

Starting as a coordinator in 2010, DeLucia was responsible for the recruitment and orientation of residency applicants in the Pediatrics Residency Program. DeLucia soon led the recruitment, interview and selection process. While there, she enrolled in Temple’s master’s program in Adult and Organizational Development (AOD). She wanted a program that would expand her understanding of organizational dynamics and the components of change within large and complex systems.

DeLucia took on the role of Director, Office of Physician Affairs, in 2020, working on initiatives surrounding physician leadership development, communications, well-being, and diversity and inclusion of the medical staff. Recently given the Mid-Career Trailblazer Award at CHOP’s Breaking Barriers Awards ceremony, DeLucia has spearheaded the development of a professional coaching opportunity for all CHOP faculty and attending physicians, working to increase opportunities for physicians to engage in career and professional development. “Temple’s AOD program was instrumental in my development and has allowed me to leverage my influence, foster relationships and facilitate change. I draw on the concepts I learned at Temple often, and the discipline I honed in that time has strengthened my resilience.”



Andrew Bitz

Andrew Bitz, *STHM '03, EDU '24* has always had a passion for teaching, and with an early involvement in youth leadership, Bitz started his educational career teaching high school math and coaching track and field. While working on his master’s at Temple University’s School of Sport, Tourism and Hospitality Management, Bitz also took several electives in educational leadership, ultimately earning his principal’s certification and becoming a high school assistant principal, an elementary school principal, an assistant superintendent and, in 2024, superintendent of one of the fastest growing school districts in the Commonwealth, Mechanicsburg Area School District.

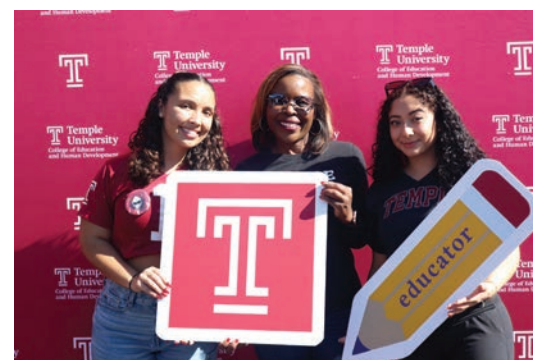
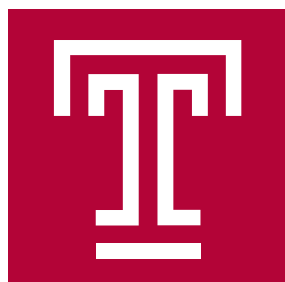
Throughout his career, Bitz has been laser-focused on his students. Now, as the district’s superintendent, that means ensuring the educational programs, physical spaces and faculty all guarantee students’ academic success. He credits his own success to several Temple professors, whom he still considers mentors.

When asked, Bitz quickly encourages others to consider the education field: “People wish for what I have every day, to make a difference for other people.”

Oscar Knade

Oscar Knade, *EDU '54* had an amazing education career that spanned over 50 years, and fittingly, has penned a memoir, *A Schoolman’s Journey*, which follows his remarkable path. Knade started as a classroom teacher, later serving as an elementary school principal and eventually superintendent of the Williamsport Area School District. His memoir explores issues facing public education and the numerous successes in the district’s academic, arts, athletics and support programs, as well as naming the people who helped create those important changes along the way. Knade names several Temple University professors in the memoir, citing them as critical in his career preparation.

After retirement, Knade continued teaching as an adjunct associate professor of educational administration and was the executive director of the Pennsylvania School Study Council and the Pennsylvania Leadership Development Center.



HOMEcoming 2024

STUDENT SUCCESS IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY: THE CEHD'S HOLISTIC APPROACH TO STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT



At Temple University's College of Education and Human Development (CEHD), success is not a singular destination. It's an ongoing journey shaped by academic milestones, financial stability and a communal sense of belonging. For Jennifer Johnson, associate dean for student success at the CEHD, this multifaceted approach is the cornerstone of her work. "Student success is everybody's responsibility," Johnson says. "Without students, we don't have a university."

This philosophy is the driving force behind a host of initiatives at the CEHD, designed to ensure students not only thrive academically but also feel supported financially and socially. From addressing unexpected costs to fostering community through intentional space design, the CEHD is proving that success is about more than grades—it's about creating an environment where students can flourish.

A Comprehensive Approach to Student Success

Within the newly created position of associate dean of student success, Johnson's role is to focus on the academic, social and financial success of students. At the heart of the CEHD's mission is a holistic strategy to support students across all facets of their lives. This includes addressing three key pillars: academic achievement, financial stability and social belonging.

Academic Achievement

For CEHD students, navigating rigorous academic programs requires access to educational tools and guidance. Under Johnson's leadership, the college works collaboratively with faculty, advisors and students to provide a roadmap for success.

One critical initiative is the Dean's Student Advisory Council, which Johnson facilitates alongside Dean Monika Williams Shealey. Created as an opportunity for undergraduate and graduate students from all levels to have a direct connection to the dean's office and provide feedback on policies and programs, the Council also serves as an opportunity to gather data from student members and the larger student body to better understand current interests and needs for engagement and belonging. This collaboration ensures that academic resources are tailored to students' needs, whether it's

rethinking course offerings or providing better academic mapping to keep students on track for graduation.

"In terms of things I've heard, they're very academic and straightforward," Johnson says. "We want to be able to map out our courses five years in advance."

"The other thing that I'm hearing is the effectiveness of some of our community work. What we're noticing is that by having these council meetings regularly, folks are starting to feel like, 'Okay, there are some things I can get involved in. There are ways that I can be a leader in the college.'"

Financial Stability

For many students, the cost of education goes beyond tuition. Unforeseen expenses—such as licensure fees, transportation and conference travel—can create barriers that hinder access. The college has taken proactive steps to alleviate some of these challenges.

"It's really looking at some of our policies and procedures to support students financially beyond what they might qualify for as an individual student," Johnson says. "How are we attentive to those other expenses that students have, such as transportation to a practicum site in a school or a community center and paying for supplies for their students

as they're working in our communities and schools? How can we help support some of those?"

By addressing these financial stressors through fundraising and small grants, the CEHD not only helps students stay enrolled but also enables them to take advantage of enriching experiences that prepare them for their careers.

Social Belonging

A sense of belonging and being tethered to community is integral to student success. For many students, particularly those who commute or are the first in their families to attend college, finding that sense of belonging can be a challenge.

To bridge this gap, the CEHD has invested in creating spaces and events that foster connection. The college has renovated student lounges in the College and is repurposing a commuter lounge space located in the Shimada Resource Center in partnership with the Undergraduate and Graduate Affairs Office, transforming these spaces into welcoming hubs for studying, socializing and collaboration.

"We want students and our adjunct faculty to have space to feel like, at any point in time, there's a spot for them," Johnson says. "You start to see the same faces, and you start to be in community, and it just kind of tethers us a little bit to the building."

Looking ahead, student input will continue to shape these projects. Johnson envisions collaborative workspaces, additional study areas, and more opportunities for students to connect with peers and faculty.



JENNIFER JOHNSON, ASSOCIATE DEAN FOR STUDENT SUCCESS (CENTER) IS JOINED BY SHANE NELSON, PHD CANDIDATE POLICY ORGANIZATIONAL AND LEADERSHIP STUDIES, AMANI RUSH, PHD CANDIDATE EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY, LATOSHA HENDERSON, ED.D., EDU '20, AND STEPHANIE TISDALE, PH.D., EDU '24

A Shared Vision for the Future

For Johnson, the work of supporting students is a collective effort. Faculty, staff and students all play a role in creating a culture of success.

"Student success is everybody's responsibility, including students, but all of our faculty, all of our staff, all of our community partners, we're all responsible and need to be responsive to student success."

This sentiment is no platitude. Johnson has held all the identities she holds accountable—as a student, with research and scholarship focused on student affairs work; as an advisor, ushering students through doctoral programs and dissertations; and now, as associate dean—and therefore understands the holistic commitment required for success.

"This is not my position forever," Johnson says. "Someone else will take up this work after me. And so I want to be able to plant some seeds that take root so that we can continue to grow and flourish as we move forward with new leadership at all levels. We want to be able to have a really strong foundation, and that really takes everyone."

For the CEHD, success is more than a buzzword—it's a promise to students, a commitment to their futures, and a testament to the power of a supportive, inclusive environment. Together, the college is not just preparing students for careers—it's preparing them for lives of purpose and impact.



DEREK COFFMAN, MAJOR GIFT OFFICER, POSES WITH FOX CHASE FARMS MASCOT, CHASE THE FOX.

Strengthening Community Partnerships: Building Connections, Fostering Success

Temple's CEHD has forged strong ties with local schools and organizations, creating opportunities for students to engage in meaningful service while benefiting the broader community.

But student success goes beyond the individual—it's rooted in the broader community, and the college's growing partnerships exemplify this commitment. One exciting upcoming project reflects the strengthening connection between the college and the greater Philadelphia area.

Beginning this past September and scheduled for installation in January 2025, a collaborative art project led by Renee Jackson, associate professor and program head in the Art Education and Community Arts Practices Department at Temple's Tyler School of Art and Architecture, will facilitate a mural for the hallway on the main floor of Ritter Annex. The project will serve as a visual representation of the college's values—resilience, connection and inclusivity—within the context of Philadelphia's vibrant community.

"The mural is a way to really bring that community, literally the face of youth and young people, into the building," Johnson says.

The mural will be constructed from mixed-media artworks created by elementary and secondary school students across Philadelphia. Students will respond to the prompt: *Who are you, and what do you care about?* Their 8"x8" pieces will form a quilt-like display that will represent the diversity and spirit of the city's youth.

For Johnson, this project reflects the college's emphasis on cultivating a sense of belonging and service to the larger community, ensuring purpose beyond academic achievement.

"We are not just a place of education, we are of service."

Beyond its aesthetic appeal, the mural symbolizes a bridge between the college and the city. It invites faculty, students and visitors to engage with the community's voices—literally and figuratively—highlighting the university's dedication to community partnership.

EMPOWERING FUTURE EDUCATORS: HOW TEMPLE'S DUAL ENROLLMENT PROGRAM PREPS STUDENTS FOR SUCCESS BEFORE COLLEGE



Increasing access to college coursework for young people is a powerful way to prepare them for success in higher education while giving them the support they need to navigate the transition. These obstacles can be especially pronounced for first-generation students and those from underrepresented backgrounds. Juliet Curci, assistant dean of college access and persistence at the College of Education and Human Development (CEHD), is focused on student success well before college.

"Many people might identify student success as how we're thinking about undergraduate and graduate students; we're thinking about how we can support young people prior to their enrollment."

Dual enrollment programs such as Temple Education Scholars aim to provide high school students with early exposure to post-secondary education, helping them become familiar with college expectations and routines while still in high school.

Beyond academics, the program emphasizes mentorship, career readiness and community building, equipping students with the skills and the support networks necessary to thrive in college and beyond. Through interactions with professors, undergraduate peers and campus resources, students begin to see themselves as part of the academic community. This shift in self-perception is critical—it helps students build confidence in their ability to succeed in a college environment and envision a future where higher education is not only attainable but also a natural part of their journey.

"[High school students] get to see themselves as college students, and it demystifies a lot about what college is about," Curci says. "That can help inform them in their college choices, like where they think about going and what they look for in a school."

Expanding access to such initiatives requires strong partnerships between schools, universities and community organizations. While the CEHD first partnered with the School District of Philadelphia, it has expanded outreach to include students from the Harrisburg School District, Bethlehem Area School District and PA Virtual Charter School. By giving students early access to college coursework and the chance to explore careers in teaching, the CEHD seeks to ensure that more young people have the tools and opportunities to realize their potential, build confidence and step into their futures with purpose.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR SCHOLARSHIP DONORS

A Personal Message



I want to begin by addressing my gratitude for receiving this scholarship. I am honored that I was granted funding from the College of Education and Human Development Scholarship Fund. I cannot express my excitement and gratitude enough. This scholarship has been incredibly beneficial for me as I was experiencing severe stress related to financial burden. Knowing I was able to attain this support has truly eased my mind and allowed me to better focus on my studies. My family is also ecstatic and grateful that I received this scholarship. It means so much to all of us.

Career Plans and Goals

I aspire to complete the Master of Education in Counseling program and become a licensed marriage and family therapist. I hope to start out in an agency, helping couples and families through mental health problems, financial difficulties, stress, traumatic experiences and more. I also want to provide one-on-one therapy to those suffering from mental illnesses such as depression, anxiety and other disorders. I want to make a difference in other people's lives by letting them express themselves through their experiences while also giving them the opportunity to grow from their personal challenges.

Temple Experience

I chose Temple University for graduate school because I saw myself fitting into the culture and was intrigued by the mental health counseling program. I did a ton of research before being accepted and read through the profiles of many faculty members, including their backgrounds and accomplishments. I was very inspired by their experience, which led me to enroll. Now, in my first semester, I am confident I made the right decision. The professors are very supportive and knowledgeable, which makes me feel comfortable and helps me thrive. I've also met a lot of like-minded classmates, several of whom have become true friends and likely future colleagues.

Thank you, again, for supporting my academic journey.

With gratitude,
Dereck Darden

Without your investment to our general scholarship fund, we could not support scholars such as Dereck.

To contribute to the fund, please visit giving.temple.edu/education.

IN MEMORIAM

We extend our deepest condolences to the family and friends of the following CEHD alumni who we lost in 2024.*



RUTH MARINO

(EDU '74, '92) was a retired school psychologist and CEHD adjunct professor of educational psychology. Marino was known for her generous spirit and mentorship. Her kindness toward so many in her community will be remembered by all who knew her for years to come.

Mrs. Gloria F. Anderson, EDU '53
Mr. Robert C. Beale, EDU '51
Mr. Donald Reamer Beck, EDU '52
Ms. Michelle Benns-Cook, EDU '15, EDU '20, EDU '22
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Reverend Rev Harry M. Vahey, Ed.D., EDU '73, EDU '77
Catherine M. Weaver, Ed.D., EDU '86
Mr. Sheldon Weisman, EDU '91
Donald L. Wright, Ed.D., EDU '67

**This is not an extensive list as Temple University may not have received notification.*

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CO-EDITOR, DIRECTOR OF EXTERNAL COMMUNITY
RELATIONS

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CO-EDITOR & WRITING CONSULTANT

Elisabeth Joyce

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HIGHER EDUCATION

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